

The Story
OF THE
Central Asian
Pioneer

Mission

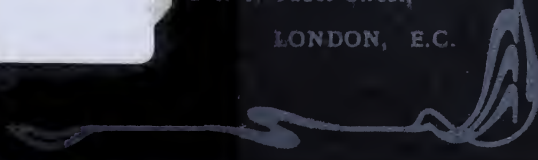


With Foreword by
Rev. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

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The story of the Central
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Central Asian

Pioneer Mission.

Founded 1902.

Issued by the Committee in the prayerful hope that this record of the Lord's dealings with some of His children may be used for His glory in the extension of His Kingdom.

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MAP OF CENTRAL ASIA.

REV. W. S. AND MRS. NORWOOD.

VIEW OF KAFIRISTAN FROM EAST TO WEST.

MURREE.

FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM THE KHAN OF HOTI-MARDAN.

PLAN OF PROPOSED BUNGALOW AND ORPHANAGE.

Foreword.

THE story unfolded in these pages carries on its face the mark of God's workmanship. I should have shrunk from recommending an enterprise which had such slender reinforcements behind it, so far as human wisdom and resources go, unless there were such indubitable evidences that God's Spirit had been leading His children in different parts of the world to agree in this matter, and had been stirring up large numbers to pray and give.

When the Apostle had rehearsed the matter from the beginning and expounded it in order, his critics were silenced: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, 'Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.'" So when we have read and pondered the remarkable story of the C.A.P.M., we can only glorify God that He has chosen "the things that are not" to take this forward step in Evangelizing one of the last countries in which the Gospel has not been preached.

F B Meyer.

I.

Central Asia.

“The history of the inception and development of the Central Asian Pioneer Mission is a wonderful illustration of the omnipotent power of prayer. The whole course of modern missions is full of romantic interest, yet no chapter in all that wondrous story is more replete with tokens of God’s approval and continuous answers to believing prayer, than is the practically unknown record of the initiation and formal foundation of this Mission.”

THE above paragraph, written shortly after the founding of this Mission, can with even more appropriateness now than then, stand at the beginning of the Manual imperatively called for by a growing demand for fuller information about the Central Asian Pioneer Mission. But before entering upon details, which of necessity take at times the form of personal narrative and reminiscence, it is advisable to define approximately the term “Central Asia,” as understood by the founders of the Mission.

From their point of view Central Asia may be said to include the great district lying between 50 and 100 degrees E. longitude and the 30th and 50th parallels of N. latitude. The length of this solid parallelogram of territory is, from East to West, 3,000 miles, or but little less than that of the Continent of Europe, measured from the extreme limit of the Ural mountains on the East to Cape St. Vincent. Its breadth is about 1,800 miles, while Europe, measured along the line drawn from North Cape in Lapland to Cape Matapan in Greece, is 2,450 miles in breadth.

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It must be remembered, however, that owing to the fact that the Central Asia of the Mission is a solid mass of land without any indentation of coast line, its actual land surface is much greater than that of Europe, exceeding it by 2,000,000 square miles.

Some considerable portion of this vast stretch of land is uninhabitable, because of its desert and mountainous character, so that the number of people living within these limits is not nearly as great as would naturally be expected if we looked only at the area.

Nevertheless in the fertile valleys, or roving as nomads over the vast plains of Central Asia, many millions of our fellow creatures are to be found living in ignorance of God, without a knowledge of the great salvation accomplished through Christ, and without hope in the world.

Though it is to reach and evangelize all these ultimately, that the Central Asian Pioneer Mission has been founded, the immediate attention and efforts of the Mission are, in accordance with Article III. of the original Constitution, directed to the N.W. Frontier of India, Kafiristan and Afghanistan.

It was felt by the founder of the Mission that he was being led of God to commence his work for Central Asia there, and specially to labour for the evangelization of the Kafirs of the Hindu Kush. The reasons which caused him to take this course will become apparent as the story proceeds.

Concerning the district and people thus more immediately within the purview of the directors and founder of the Mission, Captain W. S. Eardley Howard, I.S.C., writes:—

“As shown by the map, Kafiristan is separated from Afghanistan, Badakhshan, and Wakhan by lofty ranges of the Hindu Kush mountains on the South, West and North, whilst on the East the walls of another range are skirted by the Chitral River as it flows to Jelalabad. To the west again of

this wall, and running south, is another range between Chitral and the Yarkhun River. Situated thus in the midst of mighty ranges, it would not be surprising if Kafiristan consisted only of a jumbled dish of rugged and barren hills; but from the occasional peeps which I obtained into the interior, I was led to believe that there was a good deal of fertile plain land in the shape of flat-bottomed valleys or glens.

“As one gazes at Kafiristan from a gap in the mountains, one sees lofty peaks wrapped in clouds, profound valleys and upheaved plateaux; stretches of sterile earth and snow, crags and deep ravines with white foaming glacial streams.

“Invisible in the glens under the opaque haze, and hidden behind the snowy domes, are oases where the moonal flashes in his golden flight from the outspreading deodars, and the leopard preys upon the wild sheep and the musk deer.”

Two stories are current among the Kafirs regarding their origin, though both seem to point to the same causes and to the same period for their appearance in these sequestered valleys of the Hindu Kush. One is to the effect that at the time of the invasion of Northern India by Alexander the Great, some Greeks settled in the country, but owing to pressure from surrounding peoples, took refuge amongst these inaccessible mountains, and became the ancestors of the modern Kafir tribes. Another is that these are the descendants of wounded soldiers of Alexander's army whom he left in Bajour.

It is amongst these polytheistic heathen that the Central Asian Pioneer Mission hopes to win its first triumphs for Christ, ere pushing on to lands and peoples yet more remote and difficult of access.

II.

A Voice Calling.

TO the geographer, the naturalist, the ethnologist, the politician and the merchant, the vast region above indicated, with its scattered populations, will appeal in its own peculiar way. Each will hear and respond to the call. One will perceive a vast opportunity for scientific discovery and research opening before him; another, new groups of peoples over which to extend that political influence he seeks to establish; and another nerves himself afresh for new ventures in hope of gain.

But there is one cry, inaudible to many, rising from these forgotten lands, which is only heard by ears unsealed by the touch of a divine Hand; only responded to by hearts which beat in unison with the heart of Christ.

In all the vast region above spoken of, there is a famine, not of bread, nor of water, but of the Word of the Lord.

“Is it indeed a fact,” asks Dr. A. Neve, in an article written by him in the *Intelligencer*, of May, 1895, “that from Teheran in Persia to Bathang in China, a distance of over 3,000 miles, there is no European Protestant missionary? That a modern Marco Polo might travel right across the continent, and find even less Christianity than in the twelfth century?”

To those who see in the spread of the Kingdom of God, the only hope of the human race, such a question, however answered, is suggestive of many things.

It suggests godlessness. These millions are groping in dense darkness after an unknown God, and all in such a

condition are of necessity ignorant of the strength and joy that belongs to those to whom God in Christ has been revealed.

It suggests hopelessness. No single ray of light gladdens their dark hearts, and the Christian's hope in its uplifting strength never visits their sad hearts nor gives that promise for the future which so brightens the Christian's pathway.

"Without God, without hope—without hope, without God": the words seem to rise as a funeral dirge echoing down the long hopeless ages of man's stay on earth.

"Cries, sad cries, from these Christless regions keep ringing in our ears! Can nothing be done to reach these fine, vigorous, warlike races? Surely, where messengers of our Emperor can go, the messengers of the King of Kings can follow. Surely where travelers can go with safety, thither the missionary, also, will wend his steps.

"Some of these peoples, those of Kafiristan, for instance, have more than once asked for Christian teachers. . . ."

"Alas! nobody attempts to penetrate those gloomy passes now; no gospel light shines over these lofty mountain ranges. And yet Christ died for these people,—tens of thousands of them, such that a speedy and plentiful spiritual harvest would be reaped from among them.

"Central Asia waits for the gospel of Christ, and must receive it. . . ."¹

Surely the ear must be dull, the heart cold, that heeds neither the cry of the desolate, nor the command of Christ.

In the order, as we believe, of God's providence, both the cry and the command fell with compelling force on the ear and heart of the founder of the Central Asian Pioneer Mission.

¹ *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, May, 1895. "The Unevangelized Countries of Asia."

III.

The Answered Call.

IN February, 1896, Mr. W. S. Norwood was unaccountably arrested by the following extract from the New Year's number for 1896 of *Regions Beyond* :—

“From Teheran in Persia, to Bathang in China, a distance of over three thousand miles, there is no European Protestant missionary. Cries and cries from these Christless regions keep ringing in our ears. Have we no duty to these people? Nay, rather have we no duty to Christ? For it is He who would claim these for His own. . . . What is wanted is a Central Asian Pioneer Mission, with its base of operations in Kashmir.”

In the same magazine there were harrowing pictures of the tragedies of the slave trade in Africa, accounts of the sickening wants and gross darkness of the millions of India, records of the appalling need of many another Christless land, but although these burnt deeply into his heart, none burdened him so persistently as this awful fact—“a distance of over three thousand miles” without the knowledge of the Saviour of the world, and we in England overcrowded with preachers and teachers, “Christians among Christians evangelizing Christians over and over again.” Here was God's call to him.

“Do something to relieve these peoples,” rang incessantly in his ears. “But what can *I* do, an inexperienced junior clerk, a mere youth?” he asked himself. “To attempt such a work, with all the apparently insuperable difficulties, is surely too great an undertaking for me: I must banish it from my mind!” Thus he argued; yet the thought remained and the

burden of it grew heavier upon him day by day until he realized that God was unmistakably speaking to him. Thereupon abandoning the field of labour which he had chosen and where he had hoped to spend his life—China—he yielded himself to God for Central Asia.

If the position of Mr. Norwood at the time of this surrender be remembered—an office lad without money, education, or influence; without wealthy friends or patronage—the succeeding events which have culminated in the formation of the Central Asian Pioneer Mission will manifest, in a remarkable manner, the gracious power and wonderful working of God. He, indeed, hath chosen the weak things of the world!

Convinced that God had called him, Mr. Norwood no longer sought to evade the command, but earnestly began to seek ways and means of obedience. Hasty and impetuous, fired with this new purpose of life, wild and impracticable plans for its immediate accomplishment presented themselves to his mind. Unequipped and unknown as he was, he even entertained the idea of working his passage, if need be, to India and along the N.W. Frontier into that forsaken land of the forgotten Kafir, to tell them he had come to lead them to Jesus in answer to their call.

All those who seek to follow Jesus Christ have to learn the lesson, sometimes so hard, to “wait on the Lord,” nay, more, to wait *patiently* for Him.

“He never comes too late,
 He knoweth what is best;
 Vex not thyself—it is in vain:
 Until He cometh, rest.
 Until He cometh, rest,
 Nor grudge the hours that roll;
 The feet that wait for God—’tis they
 Are soonest at the goal;
 Are soonest at the goal
 That is not gained by speed. . . .”

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Mr. Norwood learned this lesson, sometimes by painful experience. His rash and immature schemes were all brought to nought. On one occasion he suggested to a friend a method of raising money for this work. The friend's decision was posted, with the prayer that if the suggested plan were not of God the letter might never be received. It never reached its destination! Mr. Norwood was thus prevented from embarking upon a scheme which meant considerable difficulty and would have certainly terminated in bitter disappointment.

But while plan after plan came and went like so many panoramic pictures on a screen, leaving nothing behind them but blankness, God's own plan was developing, and all unconsciously Mr. Norwood was the agent. He gathered around him one friend after another—earnest, enthusiastic Christian workers—telling them of the ways of God with him, until they became possessed with the same interest and zeal. They formed themselves into a Central Asian Pioneer Mission Prayer Band, and resolved, (1) To meet once a month for prayer and conference; (2) to subscribe, as they were able, to a fund, to be used at some future date, and in the way that God indicated, to assist in disseminating the knowledge of the Gospel among the peoples of Central Asia.

This Prayer Band was organized in August, 1896, and eventually led to the establishment of the Central Asian Pioneer Mission. Its small subscription list formed the nucleus of the funds of the Society. During the first year the number of members increased, and all continued steadfast in prayer and in faith.

Five years later, Colonel G. Wingate, C.I.E., of the Indian Army, wrote to Mr. Norwood: "In November, 1896, in my bungalow at Meean Meer (near Lahore), a prayer meeting for the Kafirs of the Hindu Kush was held. I mention this to show you that while the Holy Ghost was leading the members of your Prayer Band to intercede for Central Asia at Waltham-

stow, He was also leading us at Lahore. In 1895, also, I prayed a great deal for the Kafirs of the Hindu Kush while looking out, often with tears in my eyes, on their mountainous country."

'Twas far from the thought of the members of that insignificant Prayer Band at Walthamstow that, thousands of miles across the sea, almost on the edge of the country for which they were praying, another company of Christians was gathered together praying the same prayer!

Picture the scene God looked upon! Two small companies of His children widely differing in character and social position, absolute strangers to one another, spanning the ocean, linking land to land by one united prayer—

"For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

That united prayer prevailed with God. Three years later, members of the two Prayer Bands came into contact with one another. Six years later half the prayer was answered.

IV.

“All Things Work Together.”

IN the summer of 1897—about a year after the organization of the Prayer Band—the way quite unexpectedly opened for Mr. Norwood to enter a theological College, a friend, not by any means rich, guaranteeing the expenses. Negotiations were at once opened through Dr. Chapman with the Committee of Western College (then of Plymouth, now of Bristol), and Mr. Norwood was admitted as a missionary or ministerial student just after the beginning of the session, September, 1897—1898.

On looking back to this event, both in the date of admission and in the choice of a five years' course—which enabled him to obtain several college exhibitions and so lighten the burden resting on his unselfish friend—the controlling Hand of the ever-caring Father can be traced.

Through the years 1897—1899 the Central Asian Pioneer Mission was still a small band having regular meetings for prayer month by month without any idea of organizing into a Mission. Although its actual membership had but slightly increased, its existence by this time had become known to a number of friends moving in various spheres of influence.

At that time a rule of the London Missionary Society required students of any College hoping to enter into Missionary work to make application to the Society when half the college course had expired. Accordingly, in November, 1899, Mr. Norwood offered himself to this Society for work in

Central Asia. Believing that God had called him to work among the peoples of this country, he felt compelled to make this stipulation in his application.

The Rev. George Cousins, in a kind and sympathetic letter, replied : “ . . . Kafiristan is quite remote from this Society’s fields of operation in India ; and as the work in those already occupied is developing so satisfactorily and largely, and our resources are likely to be taxed to the utmost in providing for their needs, there is not the least probability of the Society entering upon work in the distant region of Kafiristan.”

In February, 1901, Mr. Norwood again wrote to this Society asking whether, in view of the late Mr. Arthington’s legacy bequeathed for extension work, they would remember Central Asia in their deliberations. He was again answered by Mr. Cousins : “ I am sorry that I cannot give a different answer to your pleadings than that contained in my letter of the 22nd November, 1899.” As these letters were written after much prayer, the path by way of the London Missionary Society was now deemed permanently closed.

During 1900 two important advances were made. First, it was resolved to give a certain time during the month of August to definite prayer for a medical training for Mr. Norwood. August passed—September—and the whole of the College term to the Christmas vacation, yet no answer had been received. During the vacation, however, Mr. Norwood paid a visit to the Rev. C. Wickham, of Walthamstow, who quite spontaneously mentioned the need there was in his estimation for missionary men to have at least an elementary knowledge of medicine, and he voluntarily made himself responsible for all the expenses of such a medical equipment. This was not all the answer to that month of prayer, for, when application was made for admittance to the Bristol Medical School, entrance to the practical hospital work and the instruction of the surgeons and physicians was granted to Mr. Norwood for one year *free of charge* ! In

very truth, God answers "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

The second important development was the commencement of an acquaintanceship with Colonel Wingate, of India, to whom brief reference has been made in the previous chapter. In 1896 he had prepared a Prayer Map of Kafiristan, copies of which were given to Christian friends who would agree to pray at a particular time for the evangelization of that country. About a thousand of these were printed, and they were circulated in the United Kingdom, the United States, and in India. Colonel Wingate, in one of his letters, has said: "Intimations have since come to hand showing that this prayer map was used by God to call forth the pleadings of those on whose hearts was laid the deep need of these spiritually desolate and unoccupied regions."

It was announced in *Regions Beyond*, March, 1898, that copies of this map could be obtained in England from Mrs. Keer of Malvern (wife of Major-General J. Keer, late of India). A member of the Prayer Band applied for some maps and was led to mention that a little company in Walthamstow had been praying for this very region during the past three years. The maps were duly received, and a few months later, in June, 1900, the following communication came to hand from Colonel Wingate through Mrs. Keer:—

"The piece of land, area $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres, that I bought at Hoti-Mardan, is still available. Please tell your correspondent that it was acquired through many prayers and strong cryings and tears, and that I am ready to bestow it as a free gift to any missionaries who shall go there to make it the base of operations into the regions beyond, right up to Kafiristan . . . this N.W. Frontier, the stronghold for 1200 years of Mussulman fanaticism. There the green flag of the prophet Mohammed waves over every village and hamlet, and none, not even a native catechist, has ever been able to remain across



REV. W. S. NORWOOD.



MRS. NORWOOD.

the Indian border and enter into the land and lift high the blood-stained banner of the Cross. It is virgin soil—the vast fields where no other has worked—and daily we are praying the Lord of the Harvest to draw out from the very ends of the earth, if need be, those who will be sent of God for this grand missionary achievement. At Hoti-Mardan on the 10th of last month only (April, 1900), I walked round my $4\frac{1}{2}$ acre site, God's plot of ground, and only but tears will not flow, could I have wept for hours as I viewed the dug foundations, the remnants of brick and rubble, of lime and mortar, still left on the site by the late contractor, to tell God's time was not yet . . .”

Such were the first words received from a servant of God in India in close touch with the “solid darkness” of false faiths and the unspeakable want of the souls over the Frontier.

Direct correspondence was afterwards opened with Colonel Wingate, and much information and encouragement was the result. In October, 1901, he wrote:—

“Although the Moslems of Central Asia are not, perhaps, like the Arabs, sons of Ishmael, yet they have adopted the religion of Ishmael, and there is great hope for them on account of this. It is also, of course, quite possible that some of the tribes of Central Asia are descendants of the twelve princes, sons of Ishmael. These princes were undoubtedly the patriarchs of so many tribes. Abraham said unto God, “O that Ishmael might live before Thee!,” and God answered, “As for Ishmael I have heard thee.” It was the sons of Ishmael who brought myrrh and spices, gold and offerings to the new-born Babe in the stable at Bethlehem. There was given a great promise to Hagar, and it will one day be fulfilled.”

Again, in February, 1902, writing to Mr. Norwood, he said: “I will place my $4\frac{1}{2}$ acre building site at your disposal on your arrival at that station (*i.e.*, Hoti-Mardan, a garrison station on the N.W. Frontier of India, about 30 miles N.E. of Peshawar), for the purpose of erecting a Mission Bungalow on it.”

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In order to appreciate rightly the significance of God's provision of a suitable site at Hoti-Mardan, it should be explained here that it is most difficult to acquire any freehold of land in that place. The natives hold the whole of it and are exceedingly jealous of parting with any to Europeans.

The Foundation of the Mission, and its First Missionaries.

THE time for Mr. Norwood to leave College was drawing near, and notwithstanding all the wondrous developments in the history of the Prayer Band, there was as yet no way revealed by which he could realize his absorbing desire to live and work for the Saviour in Central Asia. Was he mistaken? Did God want him elsewhere in His vineyard? Workers were required almost everywhere. But for all, except for *this* unheeded land, there existed well-tried organizations to guide and help the would-be missionary to accomplish his work. Had Mr. Norwood been able to assure himself that he was mistaken in his call, he would have received, humanly speaking, untold relief. He could then have offered himself for service in China or elsewhere under one of the many existing societies. But he felt that God had led him hitherto, and had given such unmistakable manifestations of His will concerning this special work, that he could not think himself misguided, and dared not abandon it. He therefore decided to appeal to Missionary societies—other than the London Missionary Society—who were at all likely to send workers to Central Asia.

With this end in view, Mr. Norwood had an interview in 1896 with Dr. Grattan Guinness, at Harley House, London, but was not encouraged in his purpose. The British and Foreign Bible Society and the Baptist Missionary Society were also approached, but without favourable results.

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As one Society after another declined, or stated their inability to undertake this work, the idea of forming a new Society for this special purpose began to evolve. When the last likely opening through existing societies failed, a new organization became a necessity. Why? Because the Lord Jesus said: "Go ye into *all* the world and preach the Gospel to *every* creature." Were there but one heathen soul living in that vast stretch of land in Central Asia, not knowing the good news of the Saviour's love, Christ's command would not only justify the existence of a Mission to reach that one, but would render it a necessity.

Accordingly, in January, 1902, at the monthly meeting of the Prayer Band, the members were asked to seek God's will during the ensuing month, concerning the momentous step of organizing themselves into a Pioneer Mission. The Committee of the Band were engaged throughout that month in earnest conference and prayer, that they might compile a Constitution which should embody the principles by which they believed God would have them conduct the work of such a Mission. The published "Abstract of the Constitution of the Central Asian Pioneer Mission" is the result of their prayerful consultation.

On February 14th, 1902, the Prayer Band again assembled at Walthamstow. Professor Macey, B.A., of Western College, whose sympathy and counsel had been of great assistance, came from Bristol to attend. The meeting was a small one. Few casual observers would have guessed the import of it, and had they been told, would probably have been incredulous.

Mr. Norwood presided. He spoke of the profound need of the peoples of Central Asia, the necessity of a Christian Mission to cope with that need, and the duties and privileges devolving upon those present who decided to assist in the organization of



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such a Mission. And, the speaker added, it should be remembered that the duty of giving money was not the only—nor by any means the paramount—responsibility. *Prayer* was the primary duty; prayer and giving, the second; prayer and going, the third. Persistent believing prayer, by which the resources of the Eternal God were made available, was to be their constant attitude.

The Chairman then asked friends to state their convictions arrived at after the month of prayer, concerning the desirability of establishing this new Mission. Several friends responded to this invitation, declaring their consciousness of God's leading in the matter, and expressing their willingness to share in this new service. After a moment of impressive stillness, the following proposal was spontaneously put to the meeting and adopted:—"That a Mission be organized to meet the (religious) needs of the people of Central Asia, based on the Abstract of the Constitution as read to the meeting"; and the Minute Book records—"Amidst a silence that was intense, and in which the presence of God was realized, the Mission was declared to be founded."

During the first year of the Mission's existence about thirty-six meetings were held. These were conducted chiefly by Mr. and Mrs. Norwood, other officers of the Mission assisting as opportunity offered. No collections were asked for, or taken. The appeal was always for prayer that the Lord of the Harvest would send forth labourers into Central Asia, and that he would prepare the peoples to receive the message of His grace and love.

On October 2nd, 1902, Mr. Norwood was publicly set apart for missionary work. This ordination service was held in the Marsh Street Church, Walthamstow, of which he and his wife were devoted members. Dr. Chapman, of Western

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College, Bristol, delivered the charge to the missionary from the words of *Joshua i. 5*. The Ordination Prayer was offered by the Rev. Charles Wickham, who earnestly besought Divine protection and comfort for the Lord's servant throughout all his earthly ministry. The whole service was deeply inspiring and impressive, and will be long remembered by those who were present.

From the time the Mission was established Mr. and Mrs. Norwood had hoped to be able to leave for North India some time before the end of the year (1902). So in October the question of booking their passages arose for the serious and prayerful consideration of the Committee. After earnest waiting upon God, the principle of taking *one step at a time without waiting to see the second*, was adopted in faith and hope. Mr. Norwood therefore engaged two berths on the s.s. *City of Dundee*, due to leave Liverpool for Bombay on Nov. 7th, 1902.

A deposit of half the passage money was paid, the remainder becoming due a week before sailing. Practically no money was now left in the Mission exchequer, and as the time drew near when the balance was due, the continued lack of further means caused much heart searching. Was God's time for their departure not yet? Or, was He by withholding the silver and gold seeking to test their faith? Such were the questions uppermost with them. To falter and doubt now would be dishonouring to Him who had from the beginning clearly shown that this work was marked with His sanction and approval. So the little band continued steadfast in prayer, believing that their extremity would be indeed God's opportunity—a confidence vindicated by subsequent events. On the very day the passage money became due, tidings came to hand that the sailing of the vessel would be delayed for five days, and consequently the balance payable to the shipping company would not be required for another week. During that interval more than

sufficient money and gifts were forthcoming to cover the travelling expenses and complete the equipment of our friends for their memorable journey.

A valedictory service was held on Monday, November 3rd, when, with mingled emotions of joy and sorrow, farewell and God-speed were spoken to Mr. and Mrs Norwood.

On the following Wednesday week, November 12th, they left England, and arrived at Bombay on the 12th December, 1902. They soon travelled forward to Lahore, where they remained for some months. Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. R. Jarvis, they were guests and helpers for this period at the Punjab Faith Mission and Orphanage. The sojourn there proved to be a valuable time of preparation. "Every day," wrote Mr. Norwood in reference to this time, "brings some new lesson, some fresh example of God's love, and adds another buttress to our faith in God's unfailing care."

VI.

The Headquarters of the Mission.

EARLY in May, 1903, God opened the way for Mr. and Mrs. Norwood to travel forward to Hoti-Mardan—the place where the headquarters of the Mission were to be. At first some difficulty was experienced in finding a place of abode, so the missionaries proceeded to Nowshera, a station sixteen miles south of Mardan. They did not, however, remain there long; for a stay on the Murree Hills during the hot season—almost imperative to Europeans—was arranged, the necessary expenses being met by their ever-watchful Heavenly Father. There the majestic scenery of mountain, valley, and sky proved a constant source of delight and suggestion, and God manifested Himself in great blessing and cheer to His servants.

After many vicissitudes in the negotiations with the Khan of Hoti-Mardan, Mr. and Mrs. Norwood were able to take up actual residence there in August, 1903, in a newly-built *chubara*. At last, they were in the midst of the very people for whom their prayers had oft ascended, and in the place of which they had been thinking for many years!

Hoti-Mardan is admirably situated geographically, as a base station for the Mission. Hoti is one of three Pathan villages which lie at the apex of the great angle formed by the two converging lines of mountains on the north of the plains of the Punjab. The other villages are Mardan and Baghdada.

Hoti is the most northerly village and farthest from the cantonment. It is very large and straggling, teeming with busy life, seen to perfection in the big bazaar; dirty, crowded and unsanitary to a degree.

Baghdada lies outside the cantonment, and near it is the site of the Mission buildings. It has a most monotonous appearance. The huts are built of mud or *kachcha* (sun-dried mud) bricks, and average about seven feet in height. Scarcely any foliage can be seen from the outside, and the only relief to this flat mud mound is a slightly loftier house rising here and there. The village is crowded with inhabitants, and has the reputation of harbouring most of the bad characters of the district.

Mardan is the prettiest of the three, and gives its name to the cantonment of the British officers commanding the native troops. Here the bare monotonous level is relieved by many groves of splendid shade trees, dense mulberry trees, and a prodigality of fragrant roses and other flowers. In contradistinction to the country around, Mardan cantonment is a beautiful little place, but by itself is no prettier than the scenery to be met with in England, outside the great towns, in the ordinary walks one would take. The presence of the British cantonment, and its proximity to the railway, raises the status of Mardan and distinguishes it from the other villages.

The native part is a wide, thin collection of huts and houses cut up by the splendid military roads, the chief of which is the main road to Chitral, two hundred miles north. The ground, irrigation, and climate are such that almost anything will grow there and in the district—both native and English vegetables, fruits and flowers. Many of the gardens attached to the European officers' bungalows are such as might be seen any day in England. Now and again one is reminded he is in a tropical country by the presence of a fine palm; little else, however, distinguishes them and the surrounding scenery from the common English view.

In the bazaar most of the necessary commodities of life can be purchased at ridiculously low prices. The shopkeepers and natives generally are not only civil but most polite. Domestic

The Story of the C.A.P.M.

servants in India are usually men, and are very numerous at Hoti-Mardan as elsewhere. If medical advice is needed it can be obtained from the civil surgeon, who gives his time to attend to civilians as well as to his service duties. Hoti-Mardan by position, climate, and every other consideration, is exactly suitable for a basis of operations of missionary labour into the regions beyond.

The Mission land given by Colonel Wingate lies about four hundred yards outside Mardan cantonment, and to one side of Baghdada. It is rhomboid in shape, and divided into two unequal pieces by the main road to Chitral. Its position of complete separation from the cantonment, while cutting the missionaries off from military protection, has the great advantage of being dissociated from Governmental appearance, and will assist the natives to realize that the missionaries are not Government servants. They hate the British soldier, and covet his arms, and look with suspicion upon every British official. The Assistant Commissioner stated, in a conversation with Mr. Norwood, that no matter what assertions to the contrary were made, the natives cannot or will not let go the belief that every European who resides there is in some way connected with the Government. Everything, therefore, which helps to remove that impression as regards the Mission is a great advantage.

The division of the land is also an advantage. It makes it possible to maintain a certain amount of privacy and quiet throughout the day, both of which are very necessary for personal study, prayer and instruction of the probationer of the Mission. The smaller piece of land is large enough for the Mission Hall, dispensary, and general reception and conversation rooms; here the main business of the day amongst natives from the surrounding district could be conducted. The larger piece of land on the other side of the road is admirably adapted for the erection of a suitably large

and convenient Bungalow, for the reception, accommodation, and instruction of the probationers, and the carrying on of all the responsible work of the Mission. A high wall has been erected round this piece of land which will keep out all uninvited guests, and save the students from unnecessary diversion from their studies. Here they will have a retreat for the necessary spiritual and mental work which it would be impossible to do in the noise and commotion of natives clamouring to be heard. At the out-station in Hoti village, on the other hand, they will have opportunity of coming into direct contact with the natives and enter into practical missionary work before they leave the supervision of headquarters to go alone into the unoccupied regions beyond.

Apart from a neat wall surrounding the site and a well sunk within the grounds, the land is bare. But what does *faith* see? On one plot of land a large Bungalow surrounded by a garden of fruit, vegetables, and flowers, and in the shade of some of the trees young men earnestly studying to be equipped for the most arduous yet most glorious toil. Through an open window of the Bungalow, *faith* hears the sound of glad praise, and the pleadings of intercessory prayer. On the other plot of land, *faith* sees a goodly prayer-room and a somewhat smaller building. A stream of natives are continually passing in and out the gates. Some have fingers bandaged, others eye-shades, many walk with a limp, yet look with admiration at their clean, white-bandaged foot. Some groups are earnestly talking over the "Doctor Sahib's" words about Jesus. "How strange he does not abuse our Prophet Mohammed. How loving and kind is the Prophet he tells us about! We did not know Yesu' Masih was so good. And the Doctor Sahib too, how kind to us! We must think more about this Yesu' Masih religion." All of them carry away a tract or a part of the Bible in their own vernacular. *Faith* sees it all now, even the prayer-room gathering of native and European Christians. Prayer shall realize it all to the glory of God.

VII.

Working Together with Him.



SINCE the commencement of work at Hoti-Mardan in August, 1904, the Mission has prospered under the blessing of God and fully justified its existence and the principle of faith which was adopted as its basis. The Gospel has been preached in villages where Christ had rarely, if ever, been named. Where the crescent of Mohammed had remained unchallenged, the Cross of Christ has been lifted up. For the first time many have heard the message of the love of God, and still others have read the story of the Redeemer through the printed page.

In the Homeland too there has been a lengthening of the cords and strengthening of the stakes. Times of testing have come, but sufficient grace has ever been vouchsafed. Opposition, difficulties, perplexities there truly have been, but each has disappeared in the presence of an Infinite Father, giving greater emphasis to the need of absolute dependence upon Him. New lessons of the place and power of prayer; new visions of God's marvellous working on men's hearts; new discoveries of the graciousness of His promises; new aspirations, and new hopes for the future—these are some of the "new things" God has been teaching His people in connection with the Mission.

Increasing interest in the work of the Mission has been manifested. Letters have been received from enquiring friends in America, Denmark, China, Australia, India, South Africa and Canada, and from new friends in England. At Chefoo (China) a band of missionaries meets regularly to pray for the work, and they have had loving fellowship in its support.



MURREE.

The Mission is represented in Canada by Mr. J. W. Stranks, the late Hon. Secretary of the Mission, and despite difficulties in deputation work he has won many warm friends for the Mission. Meetings to awaken prayerful interest have been held as opportunity afforded in various parts of England and around the Metropolis.

Many lives have discovered new meaning in prayer and new incentives to faith through this narrative of the Lord's dealings, and as an outcome of these gatherings intelligent petitions for the peoples of Central Asia daily ascend to the Throne of Grace. Prayer circles and auxiliaries have also been formed in some centres.

A Prayer Union was formed early in 1904 with a view to uniting into one strong fraternity of intercession those who were seeking the coming of God's Kingdom in these distant lands. Members undertake, *To regularly and systematically pray for the coming of God's Kingdom in Central Asia; and especially to tarry at the Throne of Grace to that end some time every Sunday.*

This branch of the work has developed very hopefully, and there have been many testimonies of individual profit arising from such fellowship, while the records of answered prayer witness to its important relationship to the Mission. Members have been enrolled in five different countries. Intercession is truly "the mother-tongue of the whole family of Christ." A leaflet giving a map of the countries to be evangelized and conditions of membership for the Prayer Union has been prepared for distribution.

A quarterly magazine, *Dawn in Central Asia*, has been issued since January, 1903, and has been used to testify to God's sufficiency for and watchfulness over His children. It has also been blessed in awakening interest and stimulating prayer. Every effort has been directed in its pages to represent the condition of the peoples whom it is hoped to reach: their religions, superstitions, and traditions, and in this way God's

people are being led to labour for souls who have never before occupied their thoughts, nor engaged their prayers.

In financial matters God has, according to His promise, richly honoured the faith reposed in Him. With profound joy it is recorded to His praise that there "hath not failed aught of any good thing which the Lord hath spoken—all came to pass." Without any appeal to men, the needs of the Home and Central Asian departments have been met.

Oftentimes the amount desired or required has arrived only just in time, but it *has* been in time. Whenever the Home Department has been unable to send a remittance, the missionaries' needs have been met by private gifts from friends in India and elsewhere, such gifts often arriving upon the very day their obligations to Mohammedan and heathen became due! Concerning this matter, Mr. Norwood has written, "Praise be to our God—I mean this as a matter of fact, we have not lacked." The gifts have come from rich and poor of many lands, and the Lord has so ordered it, that there has never been too much and never too little for the needs. Friends will not construe the recognition of their gifts as from God as ingratitude to them. To whatever extent the Kingdom of Jesus Christ has been furthered in Central Asia, it has been made possible, from the human side, by the earnest prayers and generous giving of many loving friends far and near. In this narrative the devout heart will read another chapter of that marvellous book of Jehovah's faithfulness and love.

Turning from the Home to Central Asian department there is much to be told of blessing and advance. Despite times of sickness and fever, the general health of the missionaries has been well sustained. Distinct progress has been made with the difficult Pushtoo language, Mr. Norwood having passed the Government Higher Standard examination in that subject. The Word of God has been read to and circulated amongst the dispensary patients. Preaching has been commenced in the

Bazaar from Dr. C. P. Lankester's dispensary. Mohammedans and Hindus, who are in religious matters deadly enemies, seem to have united to hinder this new teaching, and relentlessly harass would-be enquirers. The Mohammedans have even organized large opposition meetings in the Bazaar!

Notwithstanding these embarrassments, many seekers after truth have been impressed, and the Holy Spirit is working in dark and deluded hearts. One—an educated young Sikh who had long been groping after the true light—has confessed his faith in Christ. The story of his search for the Truth is very pathetic. Asked concerning his motive in seeking, whether for money, for rank, or for his soul's welfare, he replied, "Sahib, rupees do not matter; if I wanted them, or bread or learning, why should I not keep my present good employment? I should not leave this place, give up rupees, home, brothers and friends, for bread; I have plenty. 'Lekin siraf d'aram dapara'" ('but only for rest'—rest for soul and a holy life for time and eternity.) "I have read many books of many religions, but I am not believing fully in any; I want rest." With great joy Mr. Norwood was able to point him to the One who alone would give him the rest he so earnestly sought. This soul is a type of many who "groped for a light in their darkness" who, we trust, will be won for the Lord by means of this Mission.¹

The medical work has progressed, under the good hand of God, some two thousand cases having been dealt with. This part of the work has done much to disarm prejudice and establish confidence. The Gospels are read to the patients before treatment, and many have taken back literature to their mullahs in the distant villages. Several trans-frontier tribesmen have for the first time come under Christian influence, and the kindness accorded them will doubtless prepare the "regions beyond"

¹ We have since been deeply grieved to hear that this lad has been unable to withstand the force of trickery and hardship and has returned again, we hope only temporarily, to Sikhism.

The Story of the C.A.P.M.

for the missionary and his message. Here again, prayer for medical assistance has been abundantly answered. Early in January, 1904, Miss M. K. S. Holst, M.D., and her friend, Miss Malthi, settled in Hoti-Mardan, and a large work among the women and children was commenced. When Mr. Norwood sent the Khan of Hoti a copy of the Prayer-Union leaflet expressing his petition for a lady-doctor, these friends had already arrived, and he was able to quote to him *Isaiah lxx. 24*: "Before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear," and to remind him that God had fulfilled this promise before his eyes!

Encouraged by this answer to prayer, and realizing the need of a medical man also, the Committee devoted the months of June and July to prayer to that end. Eight days after the Committee had disbanded a letter reached the Secretary from Dr. Cecil P. Lankester, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., intimating his intention of taking up medical work at Hoti-Mardan, at which place he arrived later in the year. Both doctors are working in an independent capacity, but at the same time in perfect harmony with Mr. and Mrs. Norwood, and it is felt that although they have not joined the C.A.P.M., yet their coming is in part the answer to the prayers which had been offered for immediate medical assistance.

The relations with the Khan of Hoti still remain friendly, and Mrs. Norwood has visited his harem. Other zenanas have been entered and the seed sown will certainly bear fruit. The general attitude of the people continues friendly, although the intention of preaching Christ is well known and opposition is certain. The Mullahs have sought to refute the teaching by the Koran, but thereby have given opportunity for the further proclamation of the truth.

Reviewing the past eight years, the Committee place on record their profound conviction that this work is of God; and further, that it forms part of His plan for the evangelization of

FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM THE KHAN OF HOTI-MARDAN.

کسب نام جناب داری باره و صاحب رسالت
 پس له سلام نه معلوم دوی - چه دا ملک و
 یوسف نو چه دینتو ملک دی - او به سزا
 کسب واقع دی - و دی ملک درم شماری
 تقریباً ستور لاله به وی آویه و دی کسب دوه
 و رسه کله بیخه به وی - او خاص به صوفی
 مردان کسب تقیماش و مرش زده بیخه به وی
 کسب و دی بیخه و علاج و باره تراوسه
 پورس حیثیت ملکی طیب الیددی و اکثره
 یا علاج لودنی نشند - او به سبب دسترنی
 پیراه دارنی و دی ملک بیخه مرگاری بیخه
 ته یا ندره سر طربان و الی الی شمه تللی نهی -
 شکله و قرآن شریف و حکم به سبب به صوفی
 دسترنی کرمی شوی و دی - او صنف بیخه دسترنی
 به سبب صعبانوتی نهی به بیخه آینه به سبب
 دوی ملک تو له بیخه به تقسیم ضرورت
 کسب بیخه آری اوسه له علاج نه دسترنی -
 او و دوی عاجزانه شمه دارو لیددی او نه شمه
 علاج - او نه شوک و اکثره بیخه مقرره ده چه
 صورتی دوی آری او و صوفی علاج و لری -

او و دایس فیاض او رحمدل بادشا به علقه
 کسب دوسره زیادت اولس دینتو به دارو او
 به علاج همه لودنی قابل نفوس دی
 که شوک الیددی و اکثره دی ملک ته ناشی
 او و دوی عاجزانه بیخه بیخه تراوسه پورس
 نه خلا چه دی علاج و لری - او و دی ملک
 اول خلق به بیخه زیادت خوشن لودنی او و دایس
 به دیره دیره و علقه - او و کسب به ساسو
 اسانسد و وی - پس مریو و دی علقه قول
 خلق و اطفو اوره - چه دایس مهربانی و لری
 او و دوی الیددی و اکثره دوی دین و
 بیخه و علاج و باره را و غولاری - مریو قول
 خلق به ساسو و دی احسان شکر به اولو
 خدا ۲۱ ماه لکس بر سلسله اشراف
 ساسو بیخه دسترنی
 خان به بادور خا چه هم خان نفوس
 د صورتی مردان علاج و بیخه بیخه
 خورشید اور
 خورشید اور
 لکس اور
 لکس اور

TRANSLATION.

REV. NORWOOD SAHIB, MY KIND SIR, Peace be to you.

Please know that this country of Eusufzai is pakkhtoo, and is situate in the Frontier district; the people of this country number about four hundred thousand, and of them there is a female population of two to three hundred thousand, and in Hoti-Mardan district particularly there will be twenty to thirty thousand women; but for these women, right up to the present time, for the sake of preparing remedies, there is not one lady-doctor (European), native doctor, or even remedy-maker. And on account of "Satar," that is to say, the *parda* system, the women of this country cannot go to the civil hospitals or to native or European male doctors. The Holy Koran commands that they pass their time in strictly guarded privacy, and on account of that command to privacy they cannot go to the hospitals. Therefore, on this account, the women of this country are suffering from every kind of disease, and are dying without remedy—these helpless things have neither medicine nor remedy—and there is not one doctor-woman established to give either advice or remedy; and, because we are in dependence on your generous and compassionate King, these poor women, dying without medicine or the least proper treatment, are the more deserving of pity.

If there is any lady-doctor who will come to this country who may be able to give remedy to these poor and helpless women—who up to now are without remedy—then the entire people of this country will become very happy, and will pray very much for you, and you will be their lasting benefactor.

We, the whole people of this dependency, ask of your kindness the gift of a few lady doctors for the help of the women of this country, and we, the whole people, will thank your beneficence. Finished.

Your true friend,
 KHAN BAHADUR KHWAJA MOHAMED KHAN,
 Khan of Hoti-Mardan Dependency, Eusufzai, Peshawar District.
 (Signed) KHWAJA MHMD. KHAN.

16th October, 1903.

Central Asia. It is still the "day of small things"; but His unmistakable leading and gracious provision in the past indicate great possibilities of expansion and victory in His name in the future.

It will therefore be fitting to conclude this chapter with an ascription of praise to Him who has so abundantly blessed us. Where there has been progress, or sufficiency of grace, or means, "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes."

"We testify," writes Mr. Norwood, referring to his second year in India, "that in spite of our unworthiness and multitudinous needs, God has guided, supported, protected and kept us. He hath never left us nor forsaken us. He hath forgiven our iniquities. He hath healed our diseases. He hath redeemed our life from destruction, even in the presence of the enemy who would rejoice to destroy. He hath satisfied our mouth with good things. His pity and His grace have been immeasurable. He hath crowned us with His lovingkindness and tender mercies. Bless the Lord, oh! our souls, and all that is within us, bless His Holy Name!"

VIII.

An Open Door.

“**S**TILL FORWARD!” These words may serve as the glad keynote of the concluding chapter of the *Story of the C.A.P.M.*, which will indicate some of the lines of advance that have tended to strengthen the Mission at home, and to further the work abroad, during the year 1905.

At home, numbers of Christians to whom Central Asia was a *terra incognita*, have been awakened to deep interest in its peoples. God has given them a “concern” for the Afghan, the Kafir, and the Thibetan.

The meetings that have been held during the year have been used in the stirring of many to prayerful activity. The cry from “the man of Macedonia” has reached many sympathetic ears, and has found response in earnest prayer and loving gift. Nevertheless, there yet remains much land to be possessed. No effort should be relaxed until the appalling darkness of Central Asian peoples has been realized by the Christians of Europe and America, and until a larger band of missionaries shall have left these countries bearing thence the glad tidings of the Saviour’s love.

Abroad, ample opportunity for missionary work has been provided in Dr. C. P. Lankester’s dispensary, and in bazaar preaching.

By the courtesy of Dr. Lankester, Mr. Norwood has been privileged to address the patients who have come for treatment daily, and he has also had the pleasure of accompanying

Dr. Lankester (who kindly offered free hospitality to Mr. Norwood as a donation to the Mission) on two itinerary journeys to Adina and Bakshali and other distant villages. These visits afforded valuable experience and enabled the missionaries to preach to the crowds which assembled daily. This is practically virgin soil, and it is encouraging to note that as one result of these visits a Mullah is in correspondence with Mr. Norwood on the subject of the faith.

To those familiar with work amongst Mohammedans, the difficulties and disappointments of our brave pioneer missionaries will be well known. Preaching to a people obtuse in intellect, and whose minds are laden with inane superstitions, is not easy, yet it has been undertaken joyfully in love to Christ. The people seem to have no sense of the sinfulness of sin, and confess glibly to heinous wrongs. The mullahs' teaching is unimpeachable: Mohammed is God's Prophet: the Koran is the work of God's finger—these are their central beliefs, to woo them from which no argument, no persuasion, no appeal seems effectual. "After I had explained the Gospel to my *munshi* one day," writes Mr. Norwood, "he admitted that it was just what he needed—a Saviour from the power and consequence of sin. But such news could not be accepted as a fact; besides, the mullahs say that Jesus never died; He could not, therefore, make atonement by His death. No, such good news is too good to be true." Others, less attentive, on hearing Jesus preached as the Son of God evidence their disgust by walking away and laughing. Some are shocked, some look incredulously at the preacher, some ask for books, some try to argue—all of which signs induce the belief that the Holy Ghost is working in their midst.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the citadel of Satan will not readily capitulate. Our wrestling is not against "flesh and blood," but "against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places." The very difficulty of the work imposes a claim

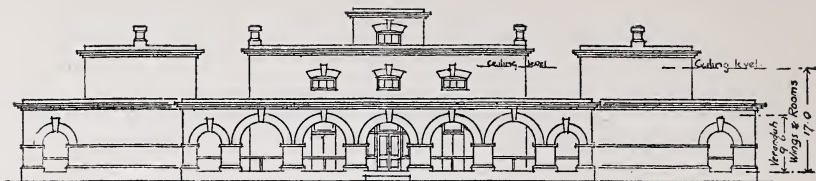
upon all God's people to exercise those weapons which are not carnal, but spiritual, and to prove that they *are* "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

Notwithstanding all difficulties there have not been lacking those who, by their repeated visits and earnest enquiry, have evidenced a desire to know the Truth. One of such seekers, whose frequent visits have awakened suspicion, is now closely watched by the Mohammedans, but, Nicodemus-like, he calls at night. Two English-speaking Mohammedans in Government posts; a backslider; a mullah; a poor sufferer in consumption are other enquirers—a pathetic company of those who—

"Grope for a light in their darkness,
And call on their gods for aid,"

hoping to find in the missionary's teaching that cleansing from sin and deliverance from its power which Mohammed cannot give.

As the work develops, the need for many things which appear essential to its progress and greater usefulness, becomes more apparent. An instance is afforded in the need of suitable buildings. Two poorly-ventilated rooms in an Indian bazaar, in an atmosphere charged with evil-smelling odours and rent with jarring and discordant sounds, is not the place from which an effective campaign can be directed beyond the Frontier. Yet this correctly describes the home where at present our missionaries live. Without question, a forward movement carries with it the necessity for new workers. New workers will need a home, and training centre; native teachers will need a place for meetings; surgical and other cases will need a hospital, and converts will need a place of worship. In short, a Bungalow, a Training Institute, Hospital and Mission Hall are required to compass the work, As has been already mentioned, the Mission holds plans for these, and also land upon which to erect the buildings. The total cost is consider-

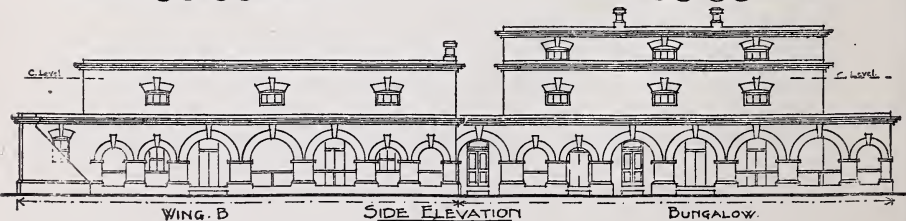
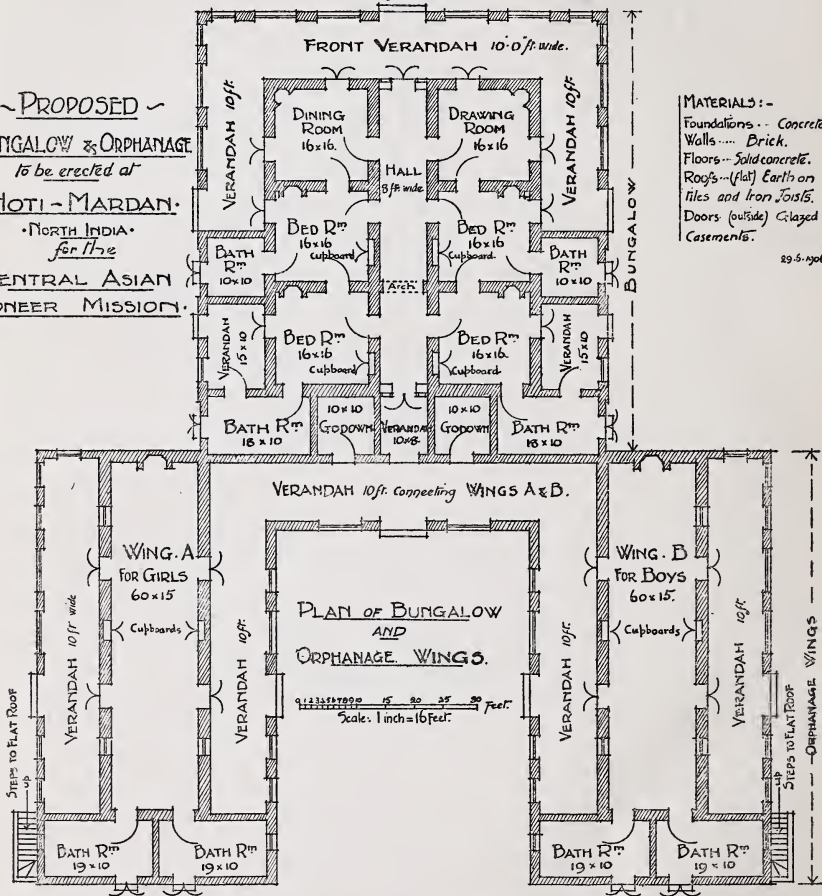


FRONT ELEVATION BUNGALOW

~ PROPOSED ~
BUNGALOW & ORPHANAGE
 to be erected at
HOTI - MARDAN.
 NORTH INDIA.
 for the
CENTRAL ASIAN
PIONEER MISSION.

MATERIALS :-
 Foundations - Concrete.
 Walls - Brick.
 Floors - Solid concrete.
 Roofs - (flat) Earth on tiles and iron joists.
 Doors (outside) Glazed Casements.

29.5.1906.



WING B SIDE ELEVATION BUNGALOW

able, but the Committee purpose making a commencement by the erection of a Bungalow, when the Lord makes that step possible.

The political movements in Central Asia during 1905 are not without significance to those who trace the Hand of God in the activities of Governments, and these may appropriately be referred to in this chapter. It is a matter of deep gratitude that the war with Thibet has ended, and that a Treaty has been concluded at Lhasa and subsequently ratified at Calcutta, which will doubtless help in removing some of the restrictions which effectually blighted all missionary endeavour in that country among a people so interesting as the Thibetans. The presence of the Tashi Lama in Calcutta during the Royal visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to this, the second city of the Empire will help to cement the Treaty and to lessen the distrust of foreigners which has always characterised both the inhabitants of Thibet and their rulers at Lhasa.

The outlook in respect of Afghanistan is also more promising. A Mission presided over by the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department was despatched to Cabul, where it remained for several weeks engaged in renewing the Treaty that exists between the Amîr and this country. The inspection of the Khyber Pass by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales as far as Landi Kotal may likewise have a favourable effect on the tribes.

The restoration of full powers to the Maharajah of Kashmir is another event which has bearing on missionary effort across the Indian Frontier. The Maharajah's territory extends far north, Native States and tribes that acknowledge the suzerainty of Kashmir reaching to the confines of the Pamirs; while the route *via* Gilgit and Astor is the alternative approach to Chitral, and one that is even now occasionally used by British officers. As these things have happened during the past year it will be seen that to a greater extent than may be known

generally, prayers for "open doors" have been already answered, so that in respect of these portions of this vast unevangelized field of Central Asia never has there been a greater need to respond more deeply and more fully to Christ's injunction: "Pray *ye* therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth *labourers* into His harvest."

* * * * *

Central Asia—waiting!

If we feel the burden of immortal souls something will be done. If we know the sorrows of the outcast, the sick and the down-trodden of these lands we shall remain idle no longer. If we are filled with the Spirit of Christ—the spirit of self-forgetting love—we shall heed this simple, yet all-inclusive command: "Pray *ye*."

An unentered door may close; an opportunity not embraced may be lost. It may be so with regard to these harvest fields which have opened to us in mid-Asia—fields which now lie waste, untilled, unsown.

At the end of the thirteenth century an appeal was brought to Europe by Nicolas and Maffeo Polo from Kublai Khan—one of Asia's great rulers—in which he pleaded for "one hundred Christians . . . able clearly to prove by force of argument to idolaters and other kinds of folk that the law of Christ is best." Kublai further promised that if they would prove this, he and all under him would become Christians. The messengers left for their long and perilous journey across Asia to Europe, and returned after four years absence to the Khan, but instead of a hundred learned and zealous Christians, he had to be content with 'oil from the sepulchre at Jerusalem!' Thus an opportunity was lost of Christianising Asia, and thus was the field left open for those zealous emissaries of Mohammed and Buddha, whose teachings spread over the continent to this day. An open door; but the Church hesitated to enter, and it closed.

A generation ago a message was sent by the Kafirs of the Hindu Kush to the English people with the same request—send us teachers of your religion. Although the call did not fall entirely on unheeding ears, and although more than one may have tried to set out, yet the darkness of that country remained undispelled. Years passed by, and in 1895 this independent kingdom was ceded to the Amîr of Afghanistan, and its people were forced to embrace the hated religion of Islam. “This romantic goal of missionary enterprise, this fascinating picture of the Kafirs of the Hindu Kush, with an idolatry more ancient than that of the Hindus, stretching out eager hands for British protection and eager to welcome the missionaries of the Cross, *no longer exists to-day*. The unsparing proselytism of Mohammedan conquest has done its worst. Hearths and homes in their mountain fastnesses, which had been preserved inviolate for 1,000 years against the hated Mussulman foe, have been ruthlessly invaded and spoiled, the bravest of their defenders have been forcibly made into Mohammedans, and the fairest of their daughters have been torn from the arms of their natural protectors, and carried off as new supplies for the harems of the conquerors.”¹

The unentered door—closed.

In God’s mercy and providence there still remain spheres in which missionaries may labour. The doors are open, but the foregoing facts go to prove that these doors may not always remain open. Hence the intense urgency of the present appeal. We cannot, perhaps, repair the omissions of the past, but we can prevent their recurrence in the future. *Men are needed*. Men filled with the Holy Spirit, and called by Him to the work. Doctors, educationalists, evangelists could each find a field here for the exercise of their gifts. Loneliness, hardship,

¹ Vide *Across our Indian Frontier*, by Colonel G. Wingate, C.I.E., from the Hon. Secretary.

and discouragements there must inevitably be ; but what comparison have these with the inexpressible joy of preaching Christ to men and women for whom He died, and thus fulfilling the prophecy—"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light."

"Ten years ago the Church cried for open doors. God gave them. Now, only one remains closed—the door of her own heart to receive the pity of God for the world, and His power for its service."

* * * * *

These open doors appeal for the consecrated efforts of every Christian on behalf of these neglected peoples.

They call for definite, constant, believing prayer for those who, in the forefront of the battle, are seeking to overthrow the forces of ignorance, superstition and false faith.

They plead for *men*, prepared to display in the winning of these tribes that self-denying devotion and heroic self-sacrifice which have formerly stirred the Church to her foundations. "Let the merchant tell his gold ; the statesman sway his realm ; the warrior trample on his foe ; let the philosopher expound creation ; the scholar elaborate his tome ; the poet tune his lay ; but let him that would have bliss for ever unshorn, *go and win souls.*"¹

¹ William Arthur.

THE
Central Asian Pioneer Mission
Prayer Union.

BEFORE this book is laid aside and its facts and appeals allowed to find their place amongst the manifold needs of the vast world-field, the Secretary of the Prayer Union would bring before the reader an earnest request. If you have been strengthened in faith, or otherwise helped, through reading this narrative, will you do something now to help in the work to which God has called us? We very fervently ask—your prayers. We do not take anxious thought about our temporal needs: our Heavenly Father who feeds the “birds of the heaven” and clothes the “lilies of the field” will never fail to provide us with “all these things.”

But we are supremely anxious that the Spirit of God may have unrestricted sway over the hearts of every worker in the Mission at home and abroad, and that He may call many qualified men and women to the difficult but glorious work of unfurling the Gospel banner in these lands of Mid-Asia.

But are not the countries of Central Asia closed to the missionary? Some assuredly are *to the missionary*, but not to Him who “openeth and no man shutteth.” China was at one time a “great closed land,” but by the Treaties of 1858, Valignani’s cry, “O Rock, rock, when wilt thou open?” found response in the opening up of that vast Empire to the missionary and his message. Korea, once hermetically sealed

against the Christian missionary, throws open her "two-leaved gates" after the successful treatment by a Christian doctor of a member of the Royal Family. Japan—to-day the cynosure of all eyes—but a generation ago (March, 1868) issued a manifesto excluding the messengers of Christ and prohibiting her subjects from Christian worship. Having therefore these examples of countries that have been awakened from their long sleep of apathy and exclusion, shall we not "come boldly to the Throne of Grace" claiming the kingdoms of Afghanistan and Thibet and the smaller kingdoms adjacent to them for the Lord Jesus Christ?

The prophet's lament over Israel (*Isaiah xlii. 23*) concludes with a veiled rebuke to those who having marked her ignominious condition remain unmoved. "This is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore." Such language might appropriately be used regarding Central Asian peoples to-day. Again, in *Ezekiel xxii. 23-31* Jehovah lays bare the depths of sin to which Israel had fallen, and with intense pathos adds, "I sought for a man among them that should . . . stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: *but I found none . . . therefore have I poured out my indignation . . .*"

It surely must not be that the cry of Central Asia shall meet with no response. God *seeks for* men and women filled with the Spirit of Jesus Christ whose tears shall flow night and day for these priest-ridden, demon-haunted people so long left to suffer beneath the yoke of mercenary priests and ignorant mullahs. The Lord's "remembrancers" take no rest, and give Him no rest until His Name is known and adored. Praying for those who have not learned how to pray for themselves, they "open their mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction."

God SEEKS FOR intercessors of this type, and it is such men and women whom we would enrol as members of the Prayer Union of this Mission. With such a phalanx of prayer buttressing the efforts of the Mission, its hands will be made strong to pull down Satan's strongholds, and subjugate the forces of evil that are rampant in these lands to-day.

This is no hyperbole, but the serious statement of a conviction, taught in Holy Writ and confirmed by experience, that God will realize the longings of this Mission in response to the repeated and intelligent prayers of His people.

Dear Friend, if you will help us in definite, believing prayer, will you join the Prayer Union and make this a daily duty as unto the Lord?

The Union imposes no pledge, but members undertake to regularly and systematically pray for the coming of God's Kingdom in Central Asia, and especially to tarry at the Throne of Grace to that end some time every Sunday.

The subjects suggested for prayer embrace all missionaries who seek to enter these lands for Christ, the removal of Government restrictions to missionary effort, the preparation of the peoples for the Gospel, the sending forth of labourers to kingdoms accessible to the missionary, and the awakening of Christians in the Homeland to the need of pioneer efforts across our Indian Frontier. Will you unite in frequent, if not daily, prayer for these objects? If so, a card of membership and other information will be gladly sent on application to the Hon. Secretary of the Prayer Union at the Offices of the Central Asian Pioneer Mission (2 & 4, Tudor Street, London, E.C.).

May the Holy Spirit shed abroad the love of Jesus Christ in your heart, that you may be endued with His Spirit of compassion for benighted souls, and learn the secret of prevailing prayer.

THE
Central Asian Pioneer Mission.

Object.

The Central Asian Pioneer Mission was founded under the profound sense of the (religious) needs of the tribes living beyond the Indian Frontier, (Kafiristan, Afghanistan, etc.), and the Mission seeks to obey Christ's command to evangelize them as the way opens for missionary endeavour in these lands.

Character.

It is evangelical and undenominational. It is supported entirely by the free-will offerings of God's people, solicitations for money and collections not being authorized by the Constitution. No more is expended than is received, and going into debt is not permitted.

All Missionaries go forth in dependence upon God for their needs, there being no guarantee to workers of a fixed salary.

Qualifications for Missionary Work.

As regards qualifications for missionary work, it is essential that every candidate should have a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour, and should have shown aptitude for Christian work. A fair education, facility in acquiring a foreign language, knowledge of the Bible, and good health are important qualifications. They must be prepared to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." To fully-qualified Christian medical men the sphere is one of abundant opportunity and not less so for the lady doctor.

Ways of Helping.

Acquaintance with the need and reference to it in writing and in conversation would greatly assist in making the work known. The formation of circles for prayer is much desired, these centres also becoming spheres of interest and information. The Secretaries will gladly address meetings with regard to the Mission wherever these can be arranged, and literature for distribution will be sent on application.

"Dawn in Central Asia,"

The Quarterly Record of the C.A.P.M., contains reports of the work and articles upon the countries and the peoples. (10d. per annum, post free.)

Central Asian Pioneer Mission.

Founded February, 1902.

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